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MARCH'S FAMOUS FUNNY FARCES

MARCH BROTHERS, Publishers, LEBANON, OHIO

Haste Makes Waste

BY HARRIETTE WILBUR

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CHARACTERS

MR. DEXTER—*A druggist.*

JOHN—*His soda fountain clerk.*

TOMMY JONES—*A small boy.*

SCENE: *A drug store in the crude, such as any boy can make with old boxes and bottles, a few chairs, paper napkins, lemonade straws, glasses, and so on.*

COSTUMES: *Mr. Dexter is in his shirt sleeves at first. John is wearing a white coat and apron. Tommy Jones in his usual garb and hat.*

CURTAIN: *Mr. Dexter and John on the scene.*

MR. DEXTER (*rolling down his sleeves*): Well, John, business seems rather slack just now. Do you suppose you can take care of things while I run down to the bank?

JOHN (*delighted*): Oh, yes sir! Yes, sir! I can.

MR. DEXTER (*indicating different bottles, boxes, and so on*): Here's sulphur, and this is alum, with prices plainly marked. Soap is ten and fifteen cents. Toothbrushes are ten to thirty-five, each marked on the handle. Here are the cough drops, lozenges, and such things. The patent medicines are here—Johnson's Hair Tonic, Williams' Headache Powders, and so on. The prices are all on the list here. If Mrs. Lincoln comes in, give her this bottle of smelling salts, I've just got in for her; specially strong, as she likes them. Leave the prescriptions till I get back. Understand, John?

JOHN: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Indeed I do.

MR. DEXTER: All right then. I'll leave you in charge. I'll be back soon.
(*Takes hat and coat and exits.*)

JOHN (*polishing the chairs and counter industriously*): Left in charge! My, what a big fellow I am now! Oh, I'll show Mr. Dexter just how well I can take care of things. Now for the counter. (*Rearranging the boxes, bottles, and so on.*) These boxes of pills fit in better over here. And the porous plasters I'll put over here. Mr. Dexter is nice to work for, but he is a bit slow for the business, I think. We need a little more life and up-to-dateness in this store. And I guess I'll have to furnish that. And when he sees what a handy man I am, and how business picks up the minute I'm in charge, he will advance my salary, sure. Then, before long he'll be saying: "John, you've been such a faithful and excellent clerk that I've decided you're just the man I need for a partner." And some day I'll buy out Mr. Dexter, and be the proprietor myself. (*Picks up bottle of smelling salts.*) Now, here's some smelling-salt—that's what it says on the bottle—funny name. What did Mr. Dexter say about them? Oh, yes, they're to go with the headache medicines. I'll put them over here with the patent medicines, though, for there's a place that is just big enough for them. (*Stands back and looks at the counter, hands on hips.*) Now don't that counter look a hundred per cent. better? Oh, we need a little more get-up-and-get in this business. Hello, who's this?

TOMMY JONES (*running in*): Oh, Mr. Druggist, have you anything for the headache?

JOHN (*importantly*): Certainly, my boy. Sit down a moment. (*Seizes the bottle of smelling salts, draws out the cork, and holds the bottle under Tommy's nose.*) There, you begin to feel better already, I'll wager.

TOMMY (*gurgling and gasping, holds his nose, and falls back into the chair as though unconscious*).

JOHN (*shaking his hands in alarm*): Oh! Oh! Mr. Dexter! Mr. Dexter! Help! Help!! I've killed Tommy Jones! I've killed Tommy Jones! (*Rushes out and brings back a basin of water and a towel. Wets the towel and begins to slap it about Tommy's head.*) Oh! Oh! What shall I do?

TOMMY (*gasping and opening his eyes*): Oh! Oh! Oh!

JOHN (*immediately self-important and calm*): Well, my lad, do you feel better now?

TOMMY (*holding his nose*): Better? Oh, I feel awful! My nose! My nose! (*Rocks back and forth howling.*)

JOHN: Oh, that is nothing. You'll feel fit as a fiddle before long.

MR. DEXTER (*entering*): Why, what's happened, John? Someone hurt?

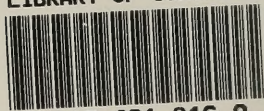
JOHN: Why, Tommy Jones here had the headache, and I just gave him the smelling salts and he nigh fainted away with fright, I guess.

MR. DEXTER: Oh, that's it! (*To Tommy.*) Well, my boy, have you the headache now?

TOMMY: What? Me the headache? I guess not. It's my mother has the headache, and she wants something quick.

MR. DEXTER (*laughing, while John stands back much crestfallen*): Well, well, John! Haste is a pretty poor policy in this business, you see. Go slow and take pains, know what you're about is a safe motto for us, my boy.

(*Curtain*)



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